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ABSTRACT

This report of a study investigating the advertising strategies of various senatorial candidates and their results presents a trend analysis of GOP Senatorial advertisements aired on television throughout the United States during the 1984 national election campaign. One hundred and one campaign spots from all geographic regions were examined in light of popular assumptions and expectations concerning the nature of modern electoral campaigns. The commercials were viewed in the context of two variables: (1) ads were studied from a regional perspective; and (2) spots were examined to determine if incumbent candidate advantages were manifested in different commercial patterns and strategies between incumbent and challenger candidates. Other factors evaluated included content theme, topic issue, source of endorsement or attack, use of symbolic artifacts, stylistic characteristics, social and location context, and actual length of the spot. Analysis revealed that attack and argument ads were the two most prevalent spot categories, suggesting a trend toward greater usage of negative spots in political campaigns. In addition, most issues were presented in a general manner, indicating that politicians tried to identify themselves with what they perceived as the most popular social attitudes and policy concerns. (A polispot preliminary code book, and 35 footnotes are appended.) (MM)

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TREND ANALYSIS OF THE 1984 GOP SENATORIAL SPOT

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INTRODUCTION

> "Some kinds of communication on some kinds of issues brought to the attention of some kinds of people under some kinds of conditions have some kinds of effects."(1)
>
> Bernard Berelson

Whereas the hucksters and the politicians have enjoyed a prosperous relationship for over thirty years, a precise connection between campaign advertising and votes - the bottom line of any political contest - has yet to be established. Political media experts agree that the only element of which we can be certain is that no one can accurately gauge the effect of political advertising on election outcome. Robert Squier, noted political expert on the subject of media consultancy writes: "The very best people in this business probably understand only about five to seven percent of what they do that works. The rest is all out there in the unknown."(2) Speechwriter and political aide Robert Goodman adds: "The crime in our business is that we never know why the candidates win or lose."(3) After over thirty years of studying political advertising on television, little can be

added with certainty to Berelson's statement concerning the contribution of the polispot to the campaign process.

Despite the nebulous connection between campaign ads and candidates' success, candidates continue to earmark large portions of their campaign budgets to the production of stylish spots utlizing the latest Madison Avenue strategies. Sources have pegged the spending of the Mondale and Reagan campaign teams for spot production and placement at over $50 million, a figure which rivals that of the entire U.S. budget in 1952.(4) It was then candidate Eisenhower who in a TV spot chastised the Democratic Congress for submitting this outrageous budgetary figure.(5) Clearly, today's politicians are comfortable with the idea of spending huge amounts to keep their names and faces in America's living rooms, even though they cannot be sure how or if such action affects the election outcome. Analysts Stephen Bates and Edwin Diamond in their discussion of the 1984 presidential campaign advertising make the following observation:

> "Pervasive and stylish as these campaign images were, they actually did very little to alter the political realities of 1984. That is, Ronald Reagan began the year with a substantial lead over Walter Mondale in the presidential preference poll, and the needle stuck there for most of the rest of the year. None of the images put forward by either campaign did much to change the numbers."(6)

One immediate question in the light of such huge spending figures is: what are the politicians getting for their money? The study

presented here suggests that the senatorial candidates obtained a diverse collection of advertising strategies, manifested in different spot styles, with the expectation that for whatever unknown reason, they will contribute to political success.

PURPOSE:

This report presents a trend analysis of GOP Senatorial advertisements aired throughout the United States during the 1984 national election campaign. The availability of one hundred and one campaign spots from all geographic regions has provided the researchers with the opportunity to examine a large group of political spots from a comprehensive perspective, in the light of popular assumptions and expectations concerning the nature of modern electoral campaigns.

In terms of an overall conceptual approach, the commercials were examined in the context of two variables. First, in order to ascertain any consistent geographic trends, the ads were studied from a regional perspective. Second, it is frequently postulated that the incumbent candidate brings certain advantages to a political contest. The spots were examined in order to determine if such advantages are manifested in different commercial patterns and strategies between incumbent and challenger candidates. Intrinsic concerns also were addressed: content theme, topic issue, source of endorsement or attack, use of symbolic artifacts, stylistic characteristics, social and

location context and actual length of the spot. The basic research strategy involved the classification of these political ads into discrete categories as outlined by Edwin Diamond and Stephen Bates in **The Spot**: ID, argument, attack, resolution.(7)

A full list of variables is included in Appendix 1, POLISPOT PRELIMINARY CODE BOOK. Whereas this is primarily a descriptive report on the trends inherent within the spots analyzed from the incumbent-challenger and geopolitical basis, it is not intended to be a comprehensive quantitative study. Where appropriate, the report will detail perceived differences and similarities between the findings of this study and the past research on political spots and campaign strategy.

The project is intended to determine: 1) the presence of trends and patterns in the commercials that are consistent with popular hypotheses and assumptions concerning the nature of political advertising, 2) to expand upon such assumptions with emphasis on such questions as regions and incumbency. Following a brief explanation of Diamond and Bates' spot types, and a presentation of the coding system and methods, the results will be presented and discussed regarding each of the general categories listed above. Within each of the areas listed in Chart 1, i.e., **topic issue**, basic findings will be highlighted followed by a comparision, where appropriate, of trends on incumbent-challenger and geo-region of the spots studied.

CHARACTERISTICS OF DIAMOND AND BATES POLITICAL SPOTS

In their publication, The Spot, the authors identify four key rhetorical types of political advertising which also usually conform to the campaign's chronology:

ID - One of the first steps in political advertising; the goal is to give the voter a sense of the candidate, to establish a foundation for name identification. Simple and innovative styles are employed to visually and graphically massage name identification throughout the spot. Association of candidate with a symbolic issue is frequently established in this type of ad. Bio spots which frame the candidate around commonly valued personal characteristics and compact narrative histories of the candidate's life are in this category.

ARGUMENT - After name recognition is established the candidate tells the viewer what he stands for. These spots characteristically lack specifics but often contain emotional "hot" spots of interest to the voter. Most commonly oriented toward issues, themes of the campaign or major ideas, arg spots feature the candidate or a constituent or political leader endorsement linking the candidate to a particular issue. They are frequently aimed toward a particular demographic or interest group.

ATTACK - Following the name recognition and establishment of issue or personality traits, the third phase of the political campaign commonly is characterized by negative advertising. Name calling, direct personal attacks, man-on-the street, and symbolic attacks are frequently used to discredit the opponent. Delivered most often by the candidate in the early years of TV spots, attack ads now are most frequently delivered by surrogate speakers.

RESOLUTION - At the end of the campaign, the candidate sums up and attempts to appear thoughtful, and dignified and reflective without the overpowering visuals and the strident voices

> of the campaign. This spot represents a return to the positive ads and usually characterizes the final week of the campaign. In recent years, the format has favored a a one-on-one style; the candidate summing up his/her thoughts to the voters. (8)

In addition to spot types, traditional geographical boundaries - north, south, midwest, and west - were examined to provide for the regional analysis. The regions, along with the actual Republican candidates whose spots were analyzed, are provided below in Chart 1. Incumbents and challengers are identified by (i) or (c) following the candidate's name. Those candidates involved in primary contests and whose spots were studied are listed, with the winner of the primary underlined. To refresh the reader, the Democratic opponents are also listed, The winner of the general election is designated by bold print:

CHART 1

NORTH:	GOP CANDIDATE	DEMOCRAT OPPONENT
MA	Elliott Richardson(c)	
MA	Ray Shamie(c)	**John Kerry**(c)
NH	**Gordon Humphrey**(i)	Norman D'Amours(c)
NJ	**Marge Rockema**(c)	**Bill Bradley**(i)
	Mary Mochary(c)	
DE	John Burris(c)	**Joseph Biden**(i)
SOUTH:		
TN	Victor Ashe(c)	**Albert Gore**(c)
WV	John Raese(c)	**Jay Rockefeller**
	Sam Kusic (c)	
MS	**Thad Cochran**(I)	William Winter(c)
TX	**Phil Gramm**(c)	Lloyd Doggett(c)
	Tom Pauken(c)	
KY	**Mitch McConnell**(c)	Walter Huddleston(i)
AR	Ed Bethune(c)	**David Pryor**(i)
SC	**Strom Thurmond**(i)	Melvin Purvis(c)
VA	**John Warner**(i)	Edith Harrison(c)
NC	**Jesse Helms**(i)	Jim Hunt(c)
AL	Albert Lee Smith(c)	**Howell Heflin**(i)

MIDWEST:

MN	Rudy Boschwitz(i)	Joan Grove(c)
NE	Nancy Hoch(c)	James Exon(i)
IA	Roger Jepsen(i)	Tom Harkin(c)
MI	Jack Lousma(c)	Carl Levin(i)
IL	Charles Percy(i)	Paul Simon(c)

WEST:

NM	Pete Domenici(i)	Judy Pratt(c)
CO	Bill Armstrong (i)	Nancy Dick(c)
WY	Malcolm Wallop(i)	Roger McDaniel(c)
MT	Max Baucus(i)	Chuck Cozzens(c)
SD	Larry Pressler(i)	George Cunningham
WY	Alan Simpson(i)	Victor Ryan(c)

CODING PROCEDURES AND DATA MANIPULATION

The available political advertisements were quantified using the above mentioned code book by four trained coders. Two coding teams were employed. Each team included two graduate students who had had training in research methods and were familiar with the process and techniques of content analysis. All coders attended multiple training sessions conducted by the principle investigators. This insured the coders were aware of the operational definitions of the categorical variables and the rules of classification used in the analysis. Sample spots were coded and discussed in order to assure that the coding procedures were objective and reliable.

The complete sample of one hundred and one political ads were divided and each team independently coded the spots that were randomly assigned to them. Coders entered the data representing each variable onto a pre-printed code sheet. The completed data

set was entered into a machine readable file.

Sub-routines of the statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS) were used to generate the information that was utilized by the investigators to develop the content and format trends found in the advertisements described in this paper.

CHART 2

SPOT CATEGORIES BY GEOGRAPHICAL REGION AND CANDIDATE TYPE

	IDS	ARGUMENT	ATTACKS	RESOL	BIO	
NORTH						
INC.	1	0	1	0	0	
CHA.	3	1	1	0	3	
						TOTAL 10
SOUTH						
INC.	1	5	11	0	0	
CHA.	8	5	4	0	0	
						TOTAL 34
MIDWEST						
INC	0	4	5	0	0	
CHA.	1	2	1	1	2	
						TOTAL 16
WEST						
INC.	4	7	5	0	0	
CHA.	2	3	0	0	0	TOTAL 21
TOTAL	20	27	28	1	5	TOTAL 81

(TOTAL DOES NOT EQUAL 101 SPOTS. 10 RNC ADS ARE NOT INCLUDED AND TEN SPOTS WERE DROPPED DUE TO MACHINE DIFFICULTIES.)

TREND ANALYSIS

SPOT CATEGORY

The analysis reveals most of the studied GOP senatorial spots to have been aired in the south, followed by the west, the midwest and the north.(See CHART 2) The majority of the commercials from the study were classified as either attack or argument, according to the Diamond and Bates categories. The argument style of ad was popular with both incumbents and challengers. The attack style, however, was far more popular with incumbent candidates than with challengers. One interesting observation concerned the fact that of incumbents who made use of attack spots, all except those in the midwest, Percy and Jepsen, were re-elected. Of the GOP challengers who used this type of spot, only McConnell of Kentucky was able to win the election. Clearly, of the commercials in the study, incumbents had greater success than challengers with the attack type of spot.

Regionally, southern candidates made far greater use of attack spots than those from any other locale, with almost three times the the number of attack ads as in the midwest, the next highest regional concentration. Furthermore, in the south, incumbents used more attack spots than challengers by an overwhelming margin.

After argument and attack, the next most popular spot category was ID. In the north, south, and midwest, the challenger candidates were more inclined to use this type of spot than were incumbents. In the west, however, the reverse was the case. The researchers observed further that the ID type of spot was popular with unsuccessful primary candidates.

The least popular spot category was the resolution type of which only one was found in the collection of ads. The candidate using this type of spot was not elected.

CONTENT STRUCTURE

> ". . . a great deal can be said though relatively few candidates do so. Straightforward positions can be made. . . . Most campaigns avoid such specifics but that has less to do with the thirty second spot format than with campaign strategy." (9)
>
> Diamond and Bates, The Spot

Most of the candidates chose not to enter into a detailed discussion of issues in their campaign advertising. The most frequent content theme found in the analysis was of the casual mention type. Rather than discussing a single topic in depth, candidates tended to address topics from a less esoteric perspective often discussing several topics in a single spot. Although both incumbents and challengers used casual mention type spots most often, the researchers observed that the challenger candidates across all regions were more inclined to use other content modes than were incumbent candidates.

Such findings are consistent with Joslyn's 1980 research of political spots, which found most political ads only mention issues without offering detailed specifics. (10)

TOPICS

One indication of a possible coherent theme of the 1984 campaign would be the presence of a consistent topic througout the individual senatorial races. It was observed, however, that there was an equal distribution among candidates for a number of diverse topics. One particular pattern was noticed. Most candidates made reference to personal character traits that they judged to be positive. This trend was particularly evident among incumbents in the south. Joslyn's earlier research also found that a predominant topic of spots studied concerned candidate qualities.(11)

In addition to character traits, the general topics of all spots most often included: national economy, taxes, personal political accomplishments. Regionally, crime also was a highlighted topic in the south and midwest.

In all regions, challengers were more apt to mention their opponents than incumbents. Regionally, in the south and midwest, the trend was for the opponent to be referred to verbally or graphically by incumbents as the initial agenda item in all spots. None of the ads in the north included reference to the

opponent.

It was observed that candidates were reluctant to use humor as a strategy in their spots. Also, very few candidate advertisements had heavy religious overtones.

Approximately, one third of all spots contained symbolic artifacts; graphic references clearly intended to evoke a desired image in relation to a particular subject. The most frequent symbolic references were issue oriented, i.e., a candidate or constituent endorser discussing farm issues while walking through a corn field. In addition, state symbols, such as the state seal or flag were included, especially in southern spots.

Use Of The President

> "For years, Jesse Helms has been telling the truth. Government can only spend what it borrows or taxes away. And, working Americans who pay this nation's bills need higher taxes like they need a plague of locusts. . . . Jesse Helms, working for all of us in the United States Senate."(12)
>
> President Ronald W. Reagan in the "salute to Jesse" spot

The researchers questioned whether the senatorial candidates would utilize endorsements from the president in their advertising, thereby taking advantage of his popularity. They found that southern candidates made greater use of President Reagan's popularity than did candidates from other regions. 72%

of all spots which included the president were aired in the south. 10% of all GOP spots analyzed contained partisan reference, a finding also consistent with Joslyn's previously cited work. Most spots featured candidate self-endorsement or paid announcers speaking on behalf of the candidate. While western incumbents primarily used consituent endorsers, challengers in the south tended to advance their own candidacy.

STYLE AND FORMAT

The majority of spots were presented in a style that can be characterized as pseudo-cinema verite'. Although giving the impression of a candidate meeting with and fielding questions from a group of constituents extemporaneously, most such scenes included an announcer or candidate voice-over rather than the actual dialogue of the scene. This technique provided an element of control within the ads, which checked the spirit of spontaneity.

Although the burden of their political past was an issue to some candidates, the confessional spot in which admissions and errors are discussed was not used in the ads studied.

There were a large number of what Diamond and Bates identify as "supers" - ads superimposing words, facts and figures over screen images.(13) This style was used often by challengers in the attack spot.

Even though the attack ads bucked the trends, most of the other spots addressed two or more topics and were 30 seconds in length. Regionally, challengers in the north and midwest were more inclined to visually and graphically repeat their names in spots than were incumbents. The reverse was found in the south and west where incumbents tended to reiterate their names in the spots studied. Visually, in the south, incumbents relied on one single camera shot of the candidate, while challengers opted for multiple photographic images of the candidate (three or more separate camera shots).

A variety of different camera techniques were used to open and close the spots. These included rolling videotape of the candidate on camera, the candidates placed in keyed windows, and the wipe. Spots, especially those of challengers, also made ample use of the latest digital graphic techniques.

Diamond and Bates characterize the resolution spot as "thoughtful and dignified without the overpowering visuals and the strident noises of the campaign."(14) The only resolution spot, that of Jack Lousma of Michigan, contained inspirational appeals. Yet, in viewing the spot, one is equally overwhelmed by the colorful visuals, which run counter to the findings of Diamond and Bates. An excerpt of the spot illustrates the style:

> Lousma: You can see the beautiful blue of the ocean. You can see the green and

> brown patchwork of the farmers' fields. You can see the beautifully painted deserts the way the Master painted them many years ago. One thing you can't see in looking at the earth and that is the boundaries that divide the countries. And you realize that those boundaries are placed there by people in their inability to get along with one another. . . . (15)

ATTACK SPOTS

> "We've always known that people like a fight. It's more newsworthy when one candidate calls the other a son of a bitch than when he puts out his white paper on education." (16)
>
> Robert Goodman

This study supports the growing trend in political campaigns of the dominance of attack ads, and suggests that in the ads examined, the regions of the country most susceptible to "like a fight" were the south and midwest. In his study of congressional races, Merritt found that one third of all spots studied were negative, a finding supported by this study. (17) (See Chart 1) Even though Diamond and Bates as well as political consultants identify this strategy as "the riskiest element of the campaign," attacks were frequently the dominant mode chosen by the candidates. (18) Given the prevalence of attacks in the spots analyzed, the discussion will attempt to address specifically the trends evident in the negative ads with illustrative examples.

Most attacks were single issue, except in the south where

candidates discussed multiple topics. To recapitulate, of the incumbents who used attacks, all but two won, and only one challenger was victorious. Thus, while research in the field suggests that incumbents who use the attack strategy run the risk of increasing the opponent's name recognition, those spots analyzed indicate that in the 1984 campaign, this concern was not crucial to those seeking re-election. Possibly one reason for the extensive use of attacks by incumbents in the midwest and south - Percy, Jepsen, and Helms - was due to the closeness of the individual races. That is, the major concern was not one of increasing the opponent's celebrity, but of using the attack to pry away support from challengers, who according to polls, were either ahead or dead-even in the contest. Past research by Merritt on negative advertising suggests that one reason for the challenger's lack of success using this mode is that such attack spots reinforce negative feelings voters hold about the underdog.(19)

Attack spots were primarily employed in the south and directed at an opponent's character traits. In a noted primary attack ad by Sam Kusic of West Virginia, the candidate's impressive use of sophisticated digital graphics was matched by a bombastic attack on his opponent, Jay Rockefeller. Using black and white graphics of a New York skyline, an off-camera announcer delivers a rapid fire message to voters:

> The Rockefeller family dynasty, Standard Oil Company, Chase Manhattan Bank, Citicorp Bank, international banks and oil companies conspiring to dominate the the world through the control of energy, money, and information. Big Brother, imposing itself on the free will of the individual, upon the free will of a people, upon the free will of the state. 1984! Rally Mountaineers! Vote Republican! Sam Kusic, sounds like music for the family of West Virginia. With Sam Kusic, United States Senate, We can Win! (23)

Attacks of this type support Charles Guggenheim's opinion that negative advertising is "fundamentally inferences, innuendos, and half arguments." Pointing out that some attacks are legitimate, Guggenheim argues that most negative spots are not. Nonetheless, he maintains that "in a short segment it is much easier to say something bad about a person than something positive about yourself."(21)

Incumbents in the south were most apt to use attacks and mention their opponents, but also address other issues - school prayer, taxes, and crime. A major theme of Helms attacks identified differences in opponent Jim Hunt's record and his political promises, as well as the large out-of-state support for Hunt. One ad massaged the age-old cleavage between north and south, asking viewers, "Who is the New York Committee to Elect Jim Hunt?" A film clip within the attack spot featured Hunt telling viewers that the New York Committee was comprised of "young people from North Carolina who went to school here at Carolina and Duke and Wake Forest and State." The off-camera announcer raises the question: "Young people from North Carolina? . . . Governor Mario Cuomo, Mayor Ed Koch, Senator Daniel Patrick

Moynihan? Now something's wrong here!" The annnouncer then informs viewers that if they "want a complete list of other young people from North Carolina to write to Jim Hunt, c/o The New York Committee to Elect Jim Hunt, 230 Park Avenue, New York, New York." The implied argument of this spot was that while carpetbagging Yankees supported Hunt, true North Carolinians should rally around Helms and preserve the state's sovereignty.(22)

Attacks in the midwest generally were more trait-oriented. Senator Charles Percy, in one of the most emotive and controversial negative spots implied that challenger Paul Simon was anti-American in his actions during the Iranian hostage crisis, and visually associated the Illinois congressman with the Ayatollah Khomeini. This ad reportedly resulted in a backlash, thus providing support for political advisor John Deardourff's view that frequently the attack ad "hardens the lines quickly - people leaning heavily toward a candidate will probably be firmed up in his favor by any attacks on him." (23) In this instance, many of the Illinois voters viewed the spot as unfair. (24)

Also, in general, challengers in the north were more issue oriented in their attacks, while incumbents in this region zeroed in on the challenger's personal traits.

One unique attack strategy adopted the same approach utilized by

consultant Robert Goodman, who often employs humor to dilute the attack message. Challenger Mitch McConnell's controversial attack spot implied that Kentucky Senator Walter D. Huddleston had been derelict in the performance of his official duties. The spot featured a hunter and blood hounds searching throughout the country for the bluegrass senator:

SPOT SUBJECT: WHERE IS DEE HUDDLESTON?

VIDEO	AUDIO
CAMERA UP ON HUNTER WITH HOUNDS SNIFFING A PRINTED "DEE HUDDLESTON" T-SHIRT AND A PICTURE OF THE KENTUCKY SENATOR.	HUNTER (SOF): "MY JOB WAS TO FIND DEE HUDDLESTON AND GET HIM BACK TO WORK."
HUNTER AND HOUNDS IN FRONT OF THE CAPITOL BUILDING SEARCHING FOR HUDDLESTON	HUNTER: "HUDDLESTON WAS MISSING BIG VOTES ON SOCIAL SECURITY, DEFENSE, AND EVEN AGRICULTURE."
HUNTER SHOWN WALKING DOWN STREETS WITH BLOOD HOUNDS IN HOT PURSUIT.	HUNTER: "HUDDLESTON WAS SKIPPING VOTES BUT MAKING AN EXTRA FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS GIVING SPEECHES.
HUNTER AND DOGS STANDING IN FRONT OF TWO HIGHWAY SIGNS WITH ARROWS POINTING IN OPPOSITE DIRECTIONS.	HUNTER: "I JUST MISSED HIM!"
HUNTER AND DOGS SHOWN BY POOL IN LOS ANGELES WITH MAN READING "VARIETY" AND LOUNGING BY POOL.	HUNTER: "WHEN DEE MISSED VOTES FOR HIS $1000 LOS ANGELES SPEECH."
HUNTER AND DOGS SHOWN ON BEACH IN PUERTO RICO.	HUNTER: "I WAS CLOSE AT DEE'S $2000 SPEECH IN PUERTO RICO. LET'S GO BOYS. I'VE GOT HIM NOW!"
HUNTER ASKS SUNBATHER THE QUESTION.	HUNTER: "CAN YOU POINT ME TO DEE HUDDLESTON? THANK YOU VERY MUCH!"
HUNTER AND HOUNDS SHOWN	HUNTER: "WE CAN'T FIND

EXHAUSTED BACK IN KENTUCKY WOODS.	DEE! MAYBE WE OUGHT TO LET HIM MAKE SPEECHES!"
SUDDEN CUT TO KEYED WINDOW AND SIGNATURE OF MITCH MCCONNELL.	HUNTER:"AND SWITCH TO MITCH FOR SENATOR." (25)

Recalling Garth's philosophy on the legitimate use of attack spots, investigation of McConnell's version raises ethical questions on content validity versus overall effect.(26) Even though the spot was popular with viewers, and was frequently singled out for its uniqueness by national correspondents, the message was actually inconsistent with the facts. Newsweek concluded that the charge against Huddleston's attendance record was "baseless"; that the Kentucky senator "was present 94 percent of the time." Furthermore, the publication's election analysis commented on the problem of such spots for lackluster candidates, concluding that, in narrowly losing the election to McConnell, Huddleston "failed to shake the scent of the slacker that the ad sprayed over him." (27)

The source of the attack was most often an unidentified off-camera announcer on behalf of the candidate. This finding suggests a possible trend in political spots. Initially, according to Diamond and Bates, direct personal attacks were prevalent, followed by political surrogates, constituents, and most recently, symbolic attacks.(28)) Employing the ticking stop-watch as a symbol, David Garth's off-camera announcer told voters they had "ten seconds to think of one job George

Deukmejian ever created," in the California gubernatorial election of 1982.(29) In this study there were no direct personal attacks, nor use of constituents or political surrogates as attackers. The use of the unidentified off-camera announcer as the principle attack source suggests that in the spots examined, the candidates placed more value on the actual message content than on a readily identifiable source.

Attack ads were the most diverse spot studied in length, ranging from 60 seconds to the more novel 10 second spot, the latter used by Senator Jesse Helms. These succinct spots adopted a similar technique to that used in one of the first attack spots; a 1956 spot featuring Democratic vice-presidential candidate Estes Kefauver employed a film clip of Eisenhower to attack Eisenhower.(30) Yet, in the Helms attack ad, the message was not delivered by an interested party but, consistent with the trend noted, by an unidentified off-camera announcer who told viewers:

SPOT'S SUBJECT: HUNT'S STAND ON TAXES

VIDEO	AUDIO
SMALL KEYED WINDOW GRAPHIC OF JIM HUNT WITH HIS HAND RAISED APPARENTLY VOTING. ALSO, NEWSPAPER HEADLINE READING: "HUNT VOTES PLAN TO INCREASE TAXES."	ANNOUNCER(VO): "WHO VOTED TO RAISE OUR TAXES? THE SAME JIM HUNT WHO SAYS . . ."
CUT TO TWO KEYED WINDOWS OF HUNT; ONE SPEAKING AND ONE STILL.	JIM HUNT(SOF): "I DO NOT PROPOSE THAT WE RAISE TAXES."

BOTH KEYED WINDOWS OF HUNT FEATURED, ALONG WITH GRAPHIC OF THE ANNOUNCER'S MESSAGE.	ANNOUNCER:(LAUGHING VO) "YOU CAN'T HAVE IT BOTH WAYS, JIM!"
TINY WINDOW OF JESSE HELMS WITH A PAID FOR.	

(31)

SPOT'S SUBJECT: HUNT'S STAND ON SCHOOL PRAYER

VIDEO	AUDIO
SMALL KEYED WINDOW GRAPHIC OF JIM HUNT, AND NEWSPAPER HEADLINE READING: "HUNT CHIDES HELMS ON HIS SUPPORT OF SCHOOL PRAYER."	ANNOUNCER(VO): "WHO CRITICIZED JESSE HELMS FOR SUPPORTING SCHOOL PRAYER?" THE SAME JIM HUNT WHO SAID. . .":
CUT TO TWO KEYED WINDOWS OF HUNT; ONE SPEAKING AND ONE STILL.	JIM HUNT (SOF): "I'VE BEEN SPEAKING OUT IN FAVOR OF VOLUNTARY PRAYER IN SCHOOLS."
BOTH KEYED WINDOWS OF HUNT FEATURED ALONG WITH A GRAPHIC OF ANNOUNCER'S OF THE ANNOUNCER'S MESSAGE.	ANNOUNCER:(LAUGHING VO): "YOU CAN'T HAVE IT BOTH WAYS JIM!"
TINY KEYED WINDOW OF JESSE HELMS WITH A PAID FOR.	

(32)

In running these issue-oriented spots, the Helms campaign identified two salient issues that it believed signaled Jim Hunt's inconsistencies, and adopted a political tac consistent with David Garth's philosophy on negative campaigning: "Where it's on the record that a man or a woman voted wrong, negative

ads are legitimate." (33)

CONCLUSIONS:

By way of conclusion, a summary of the major trends of this analysis is offered. The two most prevalent spot categories among the ads analyzed were attack and argument followed by ID. The findings of this study are commensurate with past research on growing trends in political advertising. This element of consensus suggests there to be a trend toward greater usage of negative spots in the political campaign. Regionally, attack ads were concentrated in the south and midwest, but were also found in the west and north. Attacks were a particularly important tool for incumbents involved in bitter struggles in the south and midwest, and were popular among secure incumbents in the west. The topic addressed most frequently in attack spots was character traits of the opponent, delivered by an unidentified off-camera announcer.

With the exception of a tendency among most candidates to discuss positive character traits, the distribution among topics addressed was fairly even. The only notable regional difference on this variable was that the issue of crime was mentioned often in spots shown in the south and midwest. Candidates also presented these topics in a casual style, shunning a specific detailed discussion.

The use of a popular president as an endorser was overwhelmingly favored in one region, the south, where Reagan extolled the virtues of incumbents Jesse Helms and Strom Thurmond. Roughly, three quarters of all spots with President Reagan were aired in this region.

Controlled spontaneity prevailed as the popular stylistic presentational strategy. While the candidates were reluctant to face an objective camera peering into everyday campaign episodes, they did tend to offer viewers a controlled simulation of actual campaign events, such as press conferences, rallies, or casual discussions with constituents. If actual campaign footage was utilized, it was qualified by candidate or announcer voice-overs. Actual dialogue of such events was rarely used.

The fact that most issues were presented in a less detailed manner might indicate that politicians were not overly concerned with persuading viewers to align themselves with the candidate on particular issues. It is suggested instead that candidates discussed issues in order to be identified with what they perceived to be the most popular social attitudes and policy concerns. This strategy is consistent with the position of political communication guru, Tony Schwartz, who writes: "Commercials that attempt to tell the listener something are inherently not as effective as those that attach to something that is already in him." (34)

Given the findings of the study and the prevalence of attacks in political spots, a relevant issue concerns that of propriety and ethics in negative ads. The consensus of political consultants seems to suggest that issue oriented attack ads are legitimate, and thus play an important function in the campaign. There is also public concurrence among the designers of such spots that innuendo, half-truths and ill-founded inferences detract from the public's deliberative process. Nonetheless, in the spots analyzed in this study, several attack ads catered to such undesirable appeals. In some instances, such as former Senator Charles Percy's attempt to associate challenger Paul Simon with the Ayatollah Khomeini, the public backlash to the negative spot might have been a contributing factor in the incumbent's subsequent defeat. Primary challenger Sam Kusic's unctuous use of innuendo against Jay Rockefeller highlights the potential ethical dilemma in the use of this type of spot. In an attack ad that appeared to be issue oriented, challenger Mitch McConnell successfully misconstrued the actual facts of the incumbent's voting record, and won.

Joslyn describes the political spot as "one of the few forms of communication over which the candidate has almost complete control." (35) As a logical expansion of this opinion, the public should consider political advertisements - especially the attack spots - as more than mere vehicles for the communication of information. Because the mediated reality - the content, style, and parameters - of political spots is the sole product

of the candidate and the consultant, without journalistic coloring, they provide most of the public with their only limited view of the candidate, as s/he desires to be viewed. With the growing trend favoring attack ads, further analysis should explore the intrinsic elements of the negative spot, in the attempt to better understand its usage, as well as the motives and character of candidates employing this controversial approach.

NOTES

1. Bernard Berelson, "Communication and Pubic Opinion," in Wilbur Schramm, ed., Communication in Modern Society, (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1948), p. 351.

2. Interview with Robert Squier, in Edwin Diamond and Stephen Bates, The Spot: The Rise of Political Advertising on Television, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1984), p. 353.

3. Interview with Robert Goodman, The Spot, p. 353.

4. Edwin Diamond and Stephen Bates, "The Ads," Public Opinion, vol. 7, no. 6, Dec-Jan, 1985, p. 55.

5. Dwight D. Eisenhower presidential spot, political spot collection of Emerson College News Study Group, Institute For Communication Studies, Boston. All spots mentioned are from this collection.

6. Diamond and Bates, "The Ads," p. 55.

7. Diamond and Bates, The Spot, pp. 302-345.

8. Diamond and Bates, The Spot, pp. 302-345.

9. Diamond and Bates, The Spot, pp. 380-381.

10. R.A. Joslyn, "The Content of Political Spot Ads," Journalism Quarterly, vol. 57, 1980, p. 92.

11. Josyln, p. 92.

12. President Ronald W. Reagan in "Salute to Jesse," Jesse Helms, North Carolina senatorial spot, 1984.

13. Diamond and Bates, The Spot, p. 318

14. Diamond and Bates, The Spot, p. 345.

15. Jack Lousma, Michigan senatorial spot, 1984.

16. Goodman, The Spot, p. 343.

17. F. Merritt, "Negative Political Advertising: Some Empirical Findings," Journal of Advertising, vol 13, 1984, p. 28.

18. Diamond and Bates, The Spot, p. 359.

19. Merritt, p. 36.

20. Sam Kusic, West Virginia senatorial spot, 1984.

21. Interview with Charles Guggenheim, The Spot, p. 342.

22. Jesse Helms, North Carolina senatorial spot, 1984.

23. Interview with John Deardourff, The Spot, p. 360.

24. Personal interview with Edwin Diamond, April 8, 1985.

25. Mitch McConnell, Kentucky senatorial spot, 1984.

26. Interview with David Garth, The Spot, pp. 342-343.

27. Newsweek, Nov-Dec, 1984, p. 26.

28. Diamond and Bates, The Spot, pp. 327-341.

29. Tom Bradley, California gubernatorial spot, 1982.

30. Diamond and Bates, The Spot, p. 85.

31. Jesse Helms, North Carolina Senatorial spot, 1984.

32. Jesse Helms, North Carolina Senatorial spot, 1984.

33. Garth, The Spot, p. 342.

34. Interview with Tony Schwartz, The Spot, p. 333.

35. Joslyn, p. 92.

APPENDIX 1

POLISPOT PRELIMINARY CODE BOOK

1. CANDIDATE ID NUMBER
2. OPPONENT ID NUMBER
3. INCUMBENT ID NUMBER
4. OFFICE ID NUMBER
5. STATE ID NUMBER OR "99" IF REPUBLICAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE SPOT
6. PARTY ID
   1. YES
   2. NO
7. WINNER
   1. CANDIDATE
   2. OPPONENT
8. SPOT CATEGORY
   1. ID
   2. ARGUMENT
   3. ATTACK
   4. RESOLUTION
   5. BIO
9. CONTENT THEME
   1. CASUAL MENTION OF ISSUE
   2. SPECIFIC MENTION/IN DEPTH (FACT RICH)
   3. AFFECTIVE APPEAL/(EMOTION RICH)
   4. UNFAIR/CORRUPT
10. TOPIC ISSUE
    1. INDIVIDUAL POLICIES
    2. SOCIAL SECURITY
    3. ELDERLY
    4. PARTY LOYALTY
    5. POLITICAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS
    6. EDUCATION
    7. MILITARY
    8. ATHLETIC
    9. BUSINESS
    10. ECONOMY/NATIONAL SCOPE
    11. TAXATION/INFLATION
    12. CHARACTER TRAITS
    13. CRIME
    14. REFORM
    15. OPPONENT
    16. SPECIAL INTEREST MONEY
    17. SPENDING
    18. UNEMPLOYMENT
    19. HEALTH CARE
    20. HANDICAPPED
    21. ENVIRONMENT
    22. ENERGY
    23. CHILD LAWS
    24. CANDIDATE EFFICACY
    25. FARMS
    26. PEACE
    27. ARMS CONTROL
    28. SCHOOL PRAYER
    29. WOMEN'S ISSUES
11. ENDORSEMENT/ATTACK ID
    1. CANDIDATE SELF-ADVOCATE
    2. OPPONENT
    3. PERSON IN STREET
    4. CONSTITUENT
    7. PRESIDENT
    8. CONTRIBUTORS
    9. STAFF MEMBER
    10. JOURNALIST/MEDIA
    11. PARTY SELF ADVOCATE
12. SYMBOLIC ARTIFACTS
    1. OFFICE RELATED
    2. PARTY RELATED
    3. STATE RELATED

4. ISSUE RELATED

13. USE OF HUMOR
    1. YES
    2. NO
14. RELIGOUS REFERENCE
    1. YES
    2. NO
15. MENTIONS OF OPPONENT
16. MENTIONS OF CANDIDATE
17. VISUAL INTRO TO SUBJECT
    1. GRAPHIC/KEYED WINDOW
    2. DEAD CUT TO ROLLING VTR. CANDIDATE V/O
    3. DEAD CUT TO ROLLING VTR, CANDIDATE ON CAMERA
    4. DEAD CUT TO ROLLING VTR, ANNOUNCER V/O
    5. DEAD CUT TO ROLLING VTR, ENDORSER/ATTACKER V/O
    6. DEAD CUT TO ROLLING VTR, ENDORSER/ATTACKER O/C
    7. DEAD CUT TO ROLLING VTR, OTHER
18. CANDIDATE VISUAL INTRO
    1. GRAPHIC/KEYED WINDOW
    2. DEAD CUT TO ROLLING VTR, CANDIDATE V/O
    3. DEAD CUT TO ROLLING VTR, CANDIATE ON CAMERA
19. SPOT VISUAL OUTRO
    1. GRAPHIC
    2. KEY WINDOW
    3. STILL ROLLING VTR WITH SIGNATURE SUPER IMPOSED
    4. STILL ROLLING VTR WITH SIGNATURE
    5. KEYED WINDOW GRAPHIC WITH SIGNATURE/PAID FOR
    6. STILL ROLLING VTR
20. TOTAL NUMBER OF SHOTS
21. CANDIDATE SHOTS
22. ENDORSER/ATTACKER SHOTS
23. USE OF MUSIC
    0. NONE
    1. INCIDENTAL
    2. JINGLE
    3. SOUND - NON MUSIC
24. PERSONAL IMPACT
    1. YES
    2. NO
25. SOCIAL CONTEXT
    1. ALONE
    2. FAMILY
    3. SMALL CONSTITUENT GROUP
    4. POLITICIANS/GOVERNMENT
    5. BUSINESS
    6. COMMUNITY LEADERS
26. LOCATIONAL CONTEXT
    1. WASHINGTON (OUTDOOR SHOTS)
    2. OFFICE/OFFICIAL SETTING
    3. RALLY
    4. OUTDOOR, OTHER
    5. INDUSTRIAL
    6. URBAN
    7. RURAL
    8. HOME
    9. STUDIO
    10. UNIDENTIFIABLE
    11. TOWN MEETING
    12. SCHOOL
27. CHYRON - SUPER OVER CANDIDATE (NAME ID)

28. CHYRON - OTHER

TIMING VARIABLES

29. SPOT LENGTH
30. CANDIDATE O/C
31. CANDIDATE V/O
32. ENDORSER/ATTACKER O/C
33. ENDORSER/ATTACKER V/O
34. OPPONENT O/C
35. OPPONENT V/O
36. PRESIDENT O/C and V/O
37. ANNOUNCER V/O
38. PERSONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS(NON-POLITICAL)
    1. EDUCATION
    2. MILITARY/GOVERNMENT
    3. ATHLETIC
    4. BUSINESS
    5. FAMILY